

are going to be, in my opinion, many times greater than it will be if we maintain that railroad. So I would certainly hope that we would maintain it. Thank you.

SPEAKER BAACK: Senator Elmer.

SENATOR ELMER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and members, I'm a co-sponsor on this bill for one particular main reason in that there are two long sections of branch lines in southwest Nebraska that I'm sure is going to face this kind of a situation in the future. And if we can show that it's a viable alternative through the mechanisms that we will be creating with this bill, we can have some hope to keep service to a great many small towns in southwest Nebraska. I wonder if Senator Lamb is available to answer a question.

SENATOR LAMB: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ELMER: Senator Lamb, one of the lines in southwest Nebraska that partially is within my district that's a branch line that has probably the similar kinds of problems that C&NW are now facing is about half of it in Kansas, goes down through Oberlin to St. Francis from Orleans, Nebraska. Do you think that this kind of a mechanism that we're setting up in Nebraska could be something that's a cooperative between two states if they got something put together?

SENATOR LAMB: Well, I think that is possible. There is...I believe there is a provision somewhere in the bill which states that the line did not necessarily have to be all in Nebraska, so that...that may be an option. I don't know if it is or not and it really would depend on the commission that's being set up, I think, to make that determination.

SENATOR ELMER: I presume then it would be a cooperative arrangement then with officials in Kansas who had the authority over rail lines and these types of things.

SENATOR LAMB: Well, I guess I cannot speak with any authority about that and that may be one of the things that we may need to consider in the future as this bill develops. But, as I pointed out, there was some consideration taken when the bill was drafted to a situation that you encounter there.

SENATOR ELMER: Thank you, Senator. Thank you, Senator Lamb. I